

elcome to the New Year's issue of About This Particular Macintosh. This is our premiere issue for 1999. When we say premiere, we mean it! This issue has all the nuts and bolts, meat and potatoes, and bells and whistles that Mac users demand! The only things missing from this issue are the high-tech, super-psychedelic, top-secret specifications for Apple's next generation of Macintosh hardware. For that information you'll need to read the reports from MacWorld Expo or...

Join The Team!

We've actually seen all the prototypes of the latest Macs. Unfortunately, we can't share the information until next month's issue. A person who claimed to be a representative of Mr. Jobs himself has sworn us to secrecy! Last month the staff of ATPM was invited to join Apple's exclusive Internal Development and Idea Oversight Team. This program is so secret they told us no acronym, corporate office, or e-mail address will be assigned to our activities. To avoid suspicion, Team meetings are held at a secret location in Modesto.

Although we can't divulge any information about what we saw, after a few hours of haggling we did get approval to invite one of our readers to the next Team meeting. No Monty Python-style silly walks, box tops, or long essays needed to enter our Team membership contest! To have your name placed in contention for this coveted Apple "look see" opportunity, we only ask that you prove your Mac loyalty by sending us a thirty second QuickTime movie in which you are wearing your favorite Apple T-shirt. While the digital camera is rolling all you need to do is flap your arms while shouting "cock-a-doodle-doo, my Mac is Y2K compliant too!"

Please e-mail your QuickTime clip along with your name, address and evening phone number to: <editor@atpm.com>. For entry verification purposes only, * please send the names and e-mail addresses of co-workers, in-laws, favorite members of clergy, and an old high school buddy. The winner will be notified by e-mail. Entries will not be made public or sent to co-workers, friends or family members. However, the clips but will be available for our sponsors* to review. Good luck!

*Please note: Participation in the contest grants ATPM the right to verify the identity of contestants. Persons contacted to verify the identity of contestants may be provided with information concerning ATPM's low-cost sponsorship packages.

We're #1!

Who'd a thunk it! Eighteen months ago Apple was written off on Wall Street and in the PC press. Today, the iMac reigns supreme as the #1 personal computer in the retail and mail order markets. As a matter of fact, Macintosh computers commanded 10% of retail and mail order sales during the month of November. This figure represents a doubling of Apple's market share from the prior year period. At this rate of growth, Macintosh computers will command 80% of retail and mail order sales in the year 2002!

We recommend that consumers buy a Macintosh now! With all this growth, they may be in short supply. To manage Apple's consumer-level success, perhaps the company needs a strong Chief Operating Officer from a food and beverage company (after all there are a lot of "liquid" assets to manage). Who would want a quirky visionary-type at the helm of the company? Brilliant design instincts and a flair for marketing can only take a company so far. Besides, this PC fad can't last forever. Maybe what the company needs is to divert its time and attention away from its award-winning products and focus its efforts on developing unrelated products. Maybe it should try and squeeze every buck out of Mac buyers' wallets by manufacturing ancillary hardware peripherals that compete with products offered by potential business partners.

Will history repeat itself? Let's pray not. We need to move beyond blind bias and look at the facts. Years of mediocre management at Apple stalled industry innovation and made Bill Gates and Michael Dell very wealthy. Their success has come at the expense of computer users everywhere. Apple will never be everything people would like it to be, but its absence from the mainstream PC market has resulted in an industry that offers bland products with old technology. Apple sat on its laurels in the mistaken belief that it had a franchise. Lacking technology innovation and reasonable product prices Apple Computer became a farce, not a force in its industry.

There's no logical reason that consumers should pay for floppy drives on today's PCs, and there's no excuse for the industry's slow adoption of USB (a non-Apple technology). Apple may never have an 80% (or even 25%) market share, but its presence in the marketplace can spur innovation and early adoption of new technologies. QuickTime 4.0, Mac OS X, and stellar hardware designs will benefit Apple. But its future success depends on its ability to integrate the best technologies developed by other companies while bringing to market quality products that meet the unique needs of professional users, students, and consumers.

Do everyone a favor. Show the world that Mac users are not zealots, but discriminating computer buyers who expect the best from themselves and the most from their equipment. Send in the warranty and registration cards enclosed with the hardware and software products that you buy. Let manufacturers of third-party products know that you use a Mac and let the fine folks in Cupertino know what features and technologies you'd like to see in Apple's products. The success of the iMac has opened a lot of eyes and ears. Please speak up while people are listening.

Now, back to our show!

Windows Y2K Conversion Kit

Unless our Team contestants go out in public to make their QuickTime clips, most people won't know that Mac users have the opportunity to calmly sit on the sidelines during the Y2K compliance game. No need to hire high-priced consultants or run expensive tests because virtually all software available for the Mac knows how to recognize the year 2000.

The editors of ATPM are an open-hearted bunch, and we share a deep concern for the well being of Windows users at this stressful time. The good news is that our talented staff has discovered an easy way for Windows users to have a home computer that's ready for the next millennium. No need to buy firearms, store bottled water and dehydrated foods, or empty bank accounts. All that's required are about ten minutes of time and the following household items: a pair of latex gloves, two twist-ties, a large cardboard box, a thin piece of plastic, and the latest CD-ROM compilation from the Info-Mac archives (the one that contains the most recent issue of ATPM). The ten easy steps are as follows:

1. Instruct your friend to carefully place the latex gloves on their hands.
2. Have them gently unplug all of the computer's electrical cables from the wall or floor sockets.
3. Advise them to gingerly coil the cables and secure them with the twist-ties.
4. Help your friend to slowly place the cables, monitor and CPU in the cardboard box.
5. Suggest that they locate their favorite credit card.
6. Instruct them to call 1-800-795-1000 and order a brand new G3 desktop direct from Apple.
7. Carry the box containing the old computer to the curb.
8. Help them remove the sticky gloves.
9. Await delivery of the new Mac.
10. The CD-ROM is optional, but it makes a great gift for a new Mac user!

I Can See Clearly Now The Pain is Gone!

In this month's Apples, Kids & Attitude, ATPM's colorful co-publisher gives readers his top ten

Mac predictions for 1999. In his column "New Year, New Times," Robert Paul Leitao sees better days ahead for Apple Computer and its customers. His #1 prediction may surprise you! But no cheating; please read them from bottom to top!

Yuck...Does it Only Come In Beige?

Many of us have experienced it. We have high hopes for a new job and when we arrive at the office for our first day of work it's there... and it's not Bondi blue! How does an evangelist find happiness in a non-Mac office? In this month's Apple Cider, Tom Iovino talks about survival in a Mac-hostile corporate jungle. Undaunted by PC adversity, our brave explorer searches his company's labyrinth of corridors and cubicles for an elusive Mac. Read about Tom's perilous journey inside this month's issue.

Turning The Tables

Chris Turner, ATPM's esteemed copy editor, takes a turn behind the other side of the table to pen a review of Mariner Write 2.05. In a review that should be entitled "Water, Water Everywhere and a Few Nice Drops To Drink," Chris provides readers with a dry, sophisticated look at this rather slick application.

Chris has completed his e-zine initiation and will soon be able to remove his ATPM propeller beanie. To celebrate his graduation to full staff status, he's offered to provide readers with a regular column that compares the performance of Mac hardware to offerings from the Intel camp. We'd like your input on the matter. Is this the kind of column you'd like to see featured in ATPM? Please send your comments to: <editor@atpm.com>. No QuickTime clips required.

"X" Marks The Spot!

We've had concerns about Ed Goss, ATPM's trivia columnist and UFO specialist. No matter his frequent trips to Roswell, New Mexico, we find that Ed's viewpoints are usually down-to-earth. Ed's ATPM staff bio lists Milky Way bars as his favorite food and collecting Moon rocks as his favorite hobby. While he's never mentioned any intergalactic fishing trips, we do think you'll get "hooked" on his paranormal tributes to The X-Files inside this issue.

Don't Rock the Boat; Don't Tip The Boat Over!

As Mac evangelists it's tempting to give the benefit of the doubt to developers that produce Mac compatible applications. But our first responsibility is to you, our loyal readers. Thanks to Daniel Chvatik and his top-notch crew of volunteer reviewers, we're able to provide you with first-hand reviews of many hardware peripherals and commercial software applications.

Our rating system is easy to understand and has the needs of everyday users in mind. We're not afraid to "rock the boat" if we believe a product's performance doesn't live up to its billing or is too difficult to use or understand. Please take a look at the reviews inside this

month's issue. You won't be disappointed.

But We Know The Truth

By the way, do not call anyone in Cupertino about the above-mentioned contest. They know nothing about the Team! It's a deep cover operation only known to Steve Jobs and a few of his confidants. It's so well planned, Steve Jobs has everyone at Apple Computer thinking that they work for a successful computer company. But we know the truth! Can you imagine engineering a profit, revamping the product line, squashing rumors, eliminating intrigue, and maximizing shareholder value only to keep people from getting suspicious? Gosh, he's brilliant!

What would you think if Apple's only real goal was to become a profitable, efficient and well-managed manufacturer of computer hardware and software products? What would we all do with our time? Join the Team and find out what's really going on. Send in your QuickTime clip today!

In the meantime, please enjoy our latest issue!